

Definition of Terms (Glossary)

Accommodation

Reasonable efforts an organization makes to facilitate the ability of a person with disabilities to perform.

Benchmarking

Comparing an organization's practices to the best practices of other similar organizations, or to standards established for the industry or area.

Career Ladders

Clear and achievable routes for promotion, established by the organization as a part of workforce planning. Progressive opportunities within a defined organizational scope (division, department, agency or enterprise-wide), by which employees:

- Enter the workforce
- Develop competencies
- Achieve higher level positions based on performance improvement and training success.

Coaching

A training method in which a supervisor or manager works directly with the employee, modeling and demonstrating a task or set of skills. The coach also provides feedback to the employee as the employee practices the identified activities.

Competencies (also known as “Knowledge, Skills and Abilities”)

Characteristics that contribute to successful job performance and the achievement of organizational results. These include specific knowledge, skills, abilities, attributes and/or qualities. These may be obtained through formal or non-formal education, work experience, or other means.

Competencies, Organizational (or “Core”)

Competencies that apply across all levels and units of the organization. Also, competencies that identify the most critical competencies for organizational success.

Competency Model

A set of competencies for a specific occupation, title series, or level in the organization that, when demonstrated by an employee, is likely to produce successful job performance and organizational results. The model is often developed by studying what top performers do in the defined job context.

Core Competencies

See “Competencies, Organizational (or “Core”)

Employee

An individual who performs work under the direction and control of an employer and is paid by that employer.

Employee Development

A process for preparing employees for future job responsibilities. This may include formal and informal training, education, mentoring, coaching etc.

Enterprise

Refers to the entire state administrative/executive system. On a smaller scale, any systems or organizations that share, interact or engage with each other in one or more business function, service, program, activity, etc.

Exit Interview

An interview with an employee who is leaving the organization. The purpose is to collect information which, when aggregated with the responses of other exiting employees, can guide decisions to improve overall organizational effectiveness and retention. This information would include:

- The employee's impressions of the organization's strengths and areas for improvement;
- The employee's reason(s) for leaving.

Fill Target

The number of individuals needed to fill the positions available in a given category or level.

FTE (Full-Time Equivalent)

Personnel "fill targets" (how many individuals are needed to fill the positions available) are often expressed this way. The FTE may be fewer than the number of actual people because of part-time employees (e.g. – two half-time employees equals one FTE).

Function

A major responsibility of a program or agency, with particular outcomes and outputs for internal or external customers. E.g. – computer application systems development; contract management; customer problem resolution; auditing.

Gap

Any discrepancy between two things being assessed. In this case, it will most likely be between the current state and a projected future state. The gap may be negative (not currently enough positions or KSA's to address the future need, or positive (more positions or staff with particular KSA's currently than will be needed in the future). Possible gap areas include:

- Staff supply and staff need/demand
- Competencies/KSA's needed compared to those currently available among staff in the identified positions

Gap Analysis

The process of comparing information from the supply analysis and the demand analysis to identify the differences, or "gaps." Gap analysis identifies situations in which the number of personnel or competencies in the current work force will not meet future needs, as well as situations in which current work force personnel or competencies exceed the needs of the future. Gap analysis also applies to the comparison of employee competencies with a competency model for a target occupation, level or title series.

Generational Diversity

The extent to which the employee population of an organization represents, or is influenced by, people of the generations available in the general workforce. The organization's ability to maximize the variety of thought, needs, and responses based on generation. Categories may include:

- The Greatest Generation: People born between World War I and the mid-1920's (more of an influence than a substantial presence in the workforce)
- The Silent Generation: People born between 1925 and 1945.
- Baby Boomers: People born between 1946 and 1964.
- Generation X: People born between 1965 and 1980.
- Generation Y: People in the workforce who were born in 1981 or later.

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

A document developed by both the employee and supervisor which includes an assessment of the employee's current skills, and an outline of the way in which the employee will develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to meet changing organizational needs and environmental demands and/or prepare to achieve future career goals.

Job Analysis

A process for collecting information that describes in detail the criteria for successful job performance. Typically, job analysis focuses on tasks, responsibilities, knowledge and skill requirements, and any other abilities for successful job performance.

Job Description

A written summary of the tasks, responsibilities and duties of a job.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs)

See "Competencies"

Mentoring

An informal relationship where, on an ongoing basis, a more experienced individual offers guidance and/or career advice to a less experienced colleague.

Organizational Competencies

See "Competencies, Organizational (or "Core")

Organizational Intervention Strategies

Steps an organization may take to ensure appropriate staff are properly deployed to achieve program objectives and move the organization in the desired direction. Examples include staff redeployment, reorganization, or organizational restructuring.

Orientation

The introduction of a new employee to the organization and his/her job.

Performance Management

A process where the manager and employee establish goals and the plan for achieving them. The goals are based on the operational plan of the organization and include plans for employee development.

Policy

A guide that establishes the parameters for decision making and action.

Position

A budgeted line item assigned duties and responsibilities that can be performed by one person.

Recruitment

Process for finding and attracting suitable applicants.

Selection

The process of screening applicants to ensure that the most appropriate applicant is hired.

Skill Set

A group of skills, knowledge, and abilities that, taken together, is necessary for the proficient performance of a particular function.

Strategic Direction

The primary goal(s) an organization plans to achieve as contained in its strategic plan, if available. It may also be determined as a part of Step I in the Seven Step Workforce Planning Model.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is the process an organization engages in to develop its medium and long-range goals and plans, or its “strategic direction”. Leaders use strategic planning to define the organization’s direction. (See “strategic direction.”)

Succession Planning

The process of identifying and developing individuals with a high potential for taking on leadership positions. A process designed to ensure the continued effective performance of an organization by providing for the development and replacement of key people over time. Succession planning is generally considered to be a strategy of work force planning.

Training

Providing an employee with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform her/his current job.

Turnover

The number of people who leave an organization during a set period of time (such as a year). The turnover rate is calculated as a percentage of the average number of employees during the same period.

Work Function

See “Function”

Workforce Planning

A systematic process for identifying the human resources required to meet organizational goals and developing strategies to meet those requirements. It defines the activities necessary to have "the right people with the right skills in the right positions at the right time."

